AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the paragraph starting on page 3, line 17 as follows:

In one embodiment of the present invention, each of the load balancers is associated with its own IP address, and is configured to process translation requests directed to its own IP address.

Please amend the paragraph starting on page 7, line 11 as follows:

Local network 110 is additionally coupled to a number of name servers 102 through load balancers 106-108. In one embodiment of the present invention, name servers 102 are configured to service requests to translate host names into IP addresses for hosts that are associated with virtual servers 111-113. In order to process these requests, load balancers 106-108 receive the requests and route them through routing network 104 to name servers 102. Name servers ~~111-113~~ 102 are selected to receive requests based upon measured response times. This ensures that name servers that are heavily loaded are not selected to receive additional requests.

Please amend the paragraph starting on page 8, line 5 as follows:

The name servers 102 illustrated in ~~FIG. 2~~ FIG. 1 operate generally as follows. A client 124 sending a message to a virtual serer 111 first obtains the IP address of the virtual server 111. This is accomplished by sending a host name for the virtual server 111 through load balancers 106-108 to one of name servers 102 (A). Recall that the name server is selected based upon load. Next, the selected name server translates the host name into a corresponding IP address and returns the IP address to client 124 (B). Finally, client 124 uses the IP address to communicate directly with virtual server 111 (C).

Please amend the paragraph starting on page 9, line 5 as follows:

FIG. 3 is a flow chart illustrating the process of measuring response times for name servers in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. In order to measure response times, a load balancer 106 first loads a list of name servers from a database or other storage area (box 302). Load balancer 106 then sends an information request to each name server on the list (box 304). Next, load balancer 106 listens for responses and measures response times for each of the name servers on the list (box 306). Load balancer 106 next makes a record to indicate that any name server that did not respond is unavailable ~~(box 308 Load~~ (box 308). Load balancer 106 also determines whether all remaining name servers responded within a threshold time period (box 310). If any of the name servers did not respond within the threshold time period, they are considered to be overloaded, and the load balancer 106 limits the sending of additional requests to these overloaded name servers (box 312). Note that this threshold time is selected to ensure a reasonable response time. Also note that load balancer 106 periodically repeats the above process in order to keep track of the load on name servers 102 (box 314).

Please amend the paragraph starting on page 10, line 14 as follows:

If load balancer 106 determines that load balancer 107 is alive because responses to keep alive packets sent to load balancer 107 have been received (box 412), the system repeats the process (box 414). Otherwise, if no responses to the keep alive packets are received from load balancer 107, load balancer 106 determines that load balancer 107 is not alive. In this case, load balancer 106 takes over the IP address for load balancer 107, and handles all subsequent requests that are directed to load balancer 107 (box 413).